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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-2801**  
March 17, 2005

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The Honorable Samuel Bodman  
Department of Energy  
Forrestal Building  
1000 Independence Ave, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20585

Dear Secretary Bodman,

I am writing to request that you appoint a third-party, independent agency to investigate the recent allegations that United States Geological Survey (USGS) employees falsified documents relating to Yucca Mountain Project scientific studies.

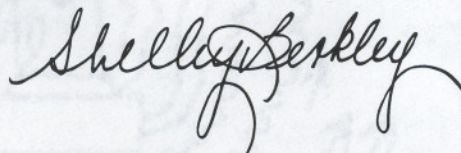
Yesterday, the Department of Energy announced that a USGS worker involved in the quality assurance program indicated via e-mails between May 1998 to 2000 that he "had fabricated documentation of his work." The documentation in question relates to computer modeling involving water infiltration and climate. Water infiltration and climate issues are two of the most fundamental factors involved in establishing whether or not the proposed repository can safely isolate waste and prevent groundwater contamination.

The Department of Energy has repeatedly assured the people of Nevada and the American public that the Yucca Mountain Project is scientifically sound. However, the latest allegations only compound existing deficiencies at the quality assurance program as identified last year by the General Accountability Office and outlined in its April 2004 report, "Yucca Mountain: Persistent Quality Assurance Problems Could Delay Repository Licensing and Operation." Clearly, the failures found by the GAO and the alleged improprieties acknowledged in your statements yesterday call into question nearly all scientific findings to date, and you should call an immediate halt to all further licensing activities.

Because of the magnitude of the Yucca Mountain Project and the potential effect on the health of residents and the environment, it is critical that the work of all agencies involved be held to the highest standards. To maintain the integrity of this project, it is necessary that an independent agency conduct a comprehensive review, prior to license application submission, of all Department of Energy documentation citing key scientific findings and research addressing safety compliance of the proposed repository.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,



SHELLEY BERKLEY  
Member of Congress